

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01

DRC-01 AID-20 /079 W

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R 040815Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2931

INFO AMCNSUL SYDNEY

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL PERTH

UNCLAS CANBERRA 2011

E.O 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, AS

SUBJ: FOURTH MEETING OF AMCHAM-EMBASSY LIAISON COMMITTEE-APRIL

3

REF: (A) CANBERRA A-260 , NOV 2, 1973

(B) SYDNEY 0435

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR MET WITH AMCHAM LIAISON COMMITTEE ON APRIL 3 FOR FOURTH MEETING IN SERIES WHICH COMMENCED IN CANBERRA JULY 1973. PRINCIPAL SUBJECT OF THIS REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING WAS PUBLIC POSTURE WHICH IT WOULD BE MOST PRODUCTIVE FOR AMCHAM AND AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO ADOPT IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROBLEMS IT IS ENCOUNTERING IN GOA POLICIES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO FOREIGN INVESTMENT. VARIOUS SHADES OF OPINION EXPRESSED BUT BROAD CONSENSUS, IN LIGHT CRITICAL PUBLIC RECEPTION OF RECENT AMCHAM SURVEY OF BUSINESS OPINION, THAT SPECIAL EFFORTSHOULD BE MADE IN FUTURE TO AVOID GIVING PUBLIC IMPRESSION THAT AMERICAN BUSINESS UNIQUELY

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HBEWLFPDVP GOA POLICIES WITHIN LARGER

BUSINESS COMMUNITY, OR THAT THERE WAS SPECIAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN AMERICAN INVESTMENT INTEREST AND CURRENT GOA. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR MET APRIL 3 AT AMERICAN NATIONAL CLUB, SYDNEY WITH LIAISON COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED IN JULY 1973 BY AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN AUSTRALIA (AMCHAM). THIS WAS FOURTH MEETING IN SERIES, THE LAST PREVIOUS MEETING HAVING BEEN HELD IN MELBOURNE IN OCTOBER 1973 (REFTEL (A)). AMBASSADOR WAS ACCCOMPANIED BY EMBASSY AND CONGEN OFFICERS.

3. MAJOR SUBJECT OF MEETING WAS CANDID LOW-KEY DISCUSSION OF FUTURE POSTURE TO BE ASSUMED BY AMCHAM AND U.S. BUSINESS COMMUNITY RESPECTING ISSUES ARISING OUT OF GOA POLCIES ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT. EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY SOUNDED OUT KEY AMCHAM OFFICERS ON THIS GENERAL SUBJECT IN COURSE OF CANBERRA LUNCHEON MARCH 27 DURING VISIT BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SEARBY. APRIL 3 MEETING WAS OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN AND CONTINUE EXPLORATORY DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

4. AMBASSADOR REVIEWED AMCHAM EXPERIENCE WITH GENERALLY CRITICAL PRESS REACTION TO PUBLICATION OF ITS RECENT SURVEY OF OPINIONS OF MAJOR AMERICAN FIRMS IN AUSTRALIA (REFTEL B) AND ASKED COMMITTEE WHETHER AMCHAM HAD HAD SIGNIFICANT OTHER PUBLIC OR GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, AS WELL AS ANY SIGNIFICANT EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM OTHER BUSINESS CIRCLES. WITH SCATTERED EXCEPTIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORTED VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF SUCH REACTIONS. IN ENSURING GIVE-AND -TAKE WE SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY THAT IN VIEW OF PASSIVITY OF MOST OTHER FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS, THE ADMIRABLY VIGOROUS PUBLICITY OF AMCHAM AND INDIVIDUAL SPOKESMEN MAY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IF IT LEADS TO PUBLIC IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS SPECIAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOA AND AMERICAN CAPITAL.

5. IN GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLINED TO AGREE THAT MORE EMPAHSIS IN FUTURE SHOULD BE PLACED ON UNCLASSIFIED

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ENCOURAGING GENERAL BUSINESS REACTIONTO POLICY PROBLEMS WHICH ARE IN FACT TROUBLING BUSINESS AS A WHOLE AND AVOIDING NARROW IDENTIFICATION OF AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AS THE SPEARHEAD OF BUSINESS OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT POLICIES. THERE WAS ALSO GENERAL AGREEMENT TO PROPOSITION THAT EARLIER CHAMBER RESEARCH ACTIVITIES CONCENTRATED ON ESTABLISHING FACTS RESPECTING SIZE, AUSTRALIAN INTEREST AND BENEFITS

OF U.S. INVESTMENT WOULD MERIT RENEWED EMPHASIS
AS COMPARED TO SURVEYS OF BUSINESS OPINION ON ABSTRACT
POLICY. ISSUES. COMMITTEE CHARMAN AND MEMBERS UNDERTOOK
TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THESE IDEAS DURING
COMING WEEKS AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAM
STEPS ALONG THESE LINES.

6. BEFORE ADJOURNING COMMITTEE ALSO HAD BRIEF
DISCUSSION OF POSSIBILITY OF BROADENING INDUSTRY
REPRESENTATION IN COMMITTEE, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR
THE ADDITION WHICH EMBASSY HAS LONG URGED OF BETTER
REPRESENTATION FOR AMERICAN EXPORT-IMPORT INTERESTS.
COMMITTEE ALSO CONSIDERING ADDITION OF REPRESENTATIVES
FROM AMERICAN TOURISM, TRANSPORTATION AND
AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT INTERESTS IN AUSTRALIA.

7. COMMITTEE TENTATIVELY PLANS WINTER MEETING IN
JUNE.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CANBER02011
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740075-1070
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740468/aaaackex.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) CANBERRA A-260 , NOV 2, 1973
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 MAY 2002 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOURTH MEETING OF AMCHAM-EMBASSY LIAISON COMMITTEE-APRIL 3
TAGS: BGEN, AS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005